



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indictments, Arrests Made in Long-Term Phoenix Gang Investigation

(Phoenix, Ariz. – October 1, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard, Department of Public Safety Director Roger Vanderpool, FBI Special Agent in Charge John Lewis, Phoenix Police Chief Jack Harris and Pete Zegarac, Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service's Phoenix Division, today announced that 35 individuals were indicted and five individuals arrested as the result of the fourth phase of Operation Blank Check, a long-term investigation of gang-related drug trafficking and criminal fraud in Phoenix.

The defendants were indicted Monday on numerous serious felony charges, including offer to sell or transfer PCP, a serious drug, offer to sell or transfer cocaine, a serious drug, offer to sell or transfer ecstasy, a serious drug, conspiracy and illegally conducting an enterprise.

Operation Blank Check is an ongoing investigation by the FBI's Violent Street Gang Task Force, the Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. To date, 124 individuals have been indicted and 44 arrested as a result of this investigation. Of those indicted on Monday, 13 had been charged in previous phases of the investigation and 18 are now in custody.

The FBI's Violent Street Gang Task Force includes the Phoenix Police Department, Arizona Department of Public Safety, Mesa Police Department and Arizona Department of Corrections.

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